

Message Text

SECRET

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 232902 TOSEC 100017

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ISLAMABAD 9689 ACTION SECSTATE
INFO TEHRAN NEW DELHI 27 SEP 77

QUOTE

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 9689

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, US

SUBJECT: GENERAL ZIA'S CONCERN OVER OMISSION OF PAKISTAN FROM
PRESIDENT'S ITINERARY

1. SHAHNAWAZ, ACTING HEAD OF MFA IN THE ABSENCE OF AGHA SHAHI,
TOLD ME LAST NIGHT THAT HE HAD PLANNED TO CALL ME IN TO
MAKE SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER
VISITING INDIA BUT NOT PAKISTAN. HOWEVER WHEN SHAHNAWAZ
MENTIONED THIS INTENTION TO GEN. ZIA, THE LATTER ASKED
THAT I COME TO SEE HIM INSTEAD. ACCORDINGLY I WENT
TO SEE GEN. ZIA THIS AFTERNOON.

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2. SHAHNAWAZ HAD GIVEN RATHER SHARP REACTION STRESSING
THAT THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND,
BECAUSE IT WAS WELL KNOWN THAT IN THE PAST US PRESIDENTS
(WE KNOW OF NO INSTANCE OF THIS EXCEPT PRESIDENT
JOHNSON'S AIRPORT STOP IN '66) AND OTHER DIGNITARIES HAD
OFTEN VISITED PAKISTAN, BUT NOT INDIA. ALSO PAKISTAN

WAS AN ALLY (THROUGH CENTO) AND INDIA WAS NOT, AND THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE LONG-RANGE INTENTIONS OF THE US GOVERNMENT IN THE SUBCONTINENT.

3. GEN. ZIA WAS SOMEWHAT Milder BUT NEVERTHELESS POINTED IN HIS FORMULATION WHEN I SAW HIM TODAY. HE URGED THAT THE PRESIDENT ALSO VISIT PAKISTAN. NOTING THAT HE HAD SEEN A USEFUL REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR YAQUB WHICH EXPLAINED THE REASONS FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ITINERARY, GENERAL ZIA SAID THAT PAKISTANIS BELIEVE THEY ARE BEING IGNORED WHEN THEY SEE A SCHEDULE THAT CALLS FOR A STOP IN IRAN AND THREE DAYS IN INDIA. ZIA SAID PAKISTAN IS "PROUD OF ITS PAST ASSOCIATION" WITH THE US AND WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE IT IF THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE WOULD PERMIT HIM TO COME. ZIA ALSO SAID THAT HE HOPED A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN OFFICE BY THE TIME OF PRESIDENT'S TRIP AND THAT HE WANTED TO EXTEND THE INVITATION ON BEHALF OF HIS SUCCESSORS.

4. IN RESPONSE, I NOTED MY REGRET THAT THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE WOULD NOT PERMIT A VISIT TO PAKISTAN DURING THE NOVEMBER TRIP, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THE VISIT TO INDIA IN NO WAY INDICATED ANY DIMINUTION OF US INTEREST IN PAKISTAN.

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5. TWO HOURS LATER, GEN. ZIA SENT AGHA HILALI, (NOW RETIRED BUT PREVIOUSLY LONG-TIME DIPLOMAT, AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON AND ALSO AGHA SHAHI'S BROTHER) TO SEE ME. HILALI AND ZIA WANTED ADVICE WHETHER A SPECIAL ENVOY SUCH AS HIMSELF SHOULD BE SENT TO WASHINGTON TO EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF A VISIT TO PAKISTAN, HOWEVER BRIEF. THEIR INTENTION WAS TO UNDERLINE THAT THIS MATTER HAS REAL AND LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE US. I ADVISED HILALI THAT NO SPECIAL ENVOY SHOULD GO TO WASHINGTON, POINTING OUT THAT DE FACTO FONMIN IS IN NEW YORK, AND COULD MAKE TELEPHONE REPRESENTATION TO AHERTON OR THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON IF SO INSTRUCTED. I ALSO NOTED SHAHI IS SCHEDULED TO SEE THE SECRETARY LATER.

6. COMMENT: THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE OMISSION OF PAKISTAN FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ITINERARY IS KEENLY FELT HERE. THE PRESIDENT'S ITINERARY IS ALREADY THE SUBJECT OF INTERNAL POLITICAL CONTROVERSY, WITH PPP SPOKESMEN CLAIMING THE US WOULD NOT HAVE DARED TREAT PAKISTAN SO SHABBILY WERE BHUTTO STILL IN POWER. ZIA

FINDS HIMSELF IN AN AWKWARD POSITION DURING AN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TIME. HE HAS CLEARLY AND PUBLICLY CAST HIMSELF IN THE POSITION OF DESIRING CLOSE TIES WITH THE US BUT IN THE PUBLIC EYE HERE IS SEEN AS REBUFFED BY THE US. AT THE MOMENT THERE MAY BE NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE. HOWEVER, IF AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT DOES ASSUME OFFICE HERE PRIOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP, IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO RECONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF ADJUSTING THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE TO PERMIT A BRIEF STOPOVER IN PAKISTAN.

7. OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST IN MEETING WITH ZIA
WILL BE SENT SEPTEL.

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UNQUOTE VANCE".

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